

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

EB-07 IO-11 SAM-01 OES-03 ACDA-05 NRC-05 /089 W

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R 030450Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1248

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMEMBASSY SUVA

CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT MORESBY 0187

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PP

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER SOMARE

1. ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB MET WITH PRIME MINISTER SOMARE AND PNG DEPT. OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE OFFICIALS FOR A THREE QUARTER HOUR LONG CONVERSATION ON FEBRUARY 29. HIGH-LIGHTS FOLLOW.

2. IN RESPONSE TO HABIB'S QUERY REGARDING THE OUTCOME OF BOUGAINVILLE TALKS SOMARE STATED "EVERYTHING IS OKAY; I FIXED IT". HE INDICATED THAT THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WILL GIVE BOUGAINVILLE MORE AUTONOMY TO PREVENT A BREAKAWAY, MAKING BOTH POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL CONCESSIONS. SOMARE ALSO TOLD THE SECESSIONISTS THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WAS LIKELY TO LOSE THE NEXT ELECTION AND THAT THEY WOULD THEN HAVE TO FACE A NEW PM WHO WOULD BE LESS REASONABLE. HE COMMENTED THAT UNLIKE OTHERS HE WAS WILLING TO TALK BEFORE TAKING ACTION. HE BELIEVES THAT LEO HANNETT (THE MOST RADICAL OF THE SECESSIONISTS) WILL GO ALONG WITH THE AGREEMENTS

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REACHED. SOMARE HAS NOT YET BRIEFED HIS CABINET, BUT

BELIEVES IT WILL ACCEPT HIS DECISIONS. IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO SELL THE AGREEMENT TO THE PARLIAMENT AS A WHOLE BUT SOMARE THOUGHT THAT NECESSITY OF THE PACKAGE WOULD BE UNDERSTOOD. SINCE PARLIAMENT MUST ACT TO REINSTATE THE BOUGAINVILLE PROVINCIAL GOVT., ITS CONSENT IS REQUIRED. THE NEGOTIATING PACKAGE WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN ABOUT THREE WEEKS.

3. HABIB WISHED PNG WELL AND INDICATED ALL OF PNG'S FRIENDS WERE WORRIED ABOUT FRAGMENTATION AND CONSIDER A SETTLEMENT TO BE PREFERABLE. HABIB INDICATED THAT PNG COULD NOW TURN BACK TO THE REGULAR PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPMENT. SOMARE THEN INDICATED THAT ONE ISSUE WAS THE SIZE AND COMPLEXITY OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE INHERITED FROM AUSTRALIA, WHICH HAD TO BE REDUCED AND MODIFIED. HE NOTED THAT THE MINISTER FOR PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ESTABLISHING PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS THROUGHOUT PNG TO DECENTRALIZE ADMINISTRATION. HABIB INDICATED THAT THE RECOVERY OF THE WORLD ECONOMY WOULD HELP PNG. HE ALSO ASKED ABOUT THE INVESTMENT GUARANTEE (OPIC) AND SOMARE INDICATED THAT IT WILL GO THROUGH THE CABINET ALL RIGHT (IT IS NOW SCHEDULED FOR PRESENTATION TO CABINET ON THE 18TH OF MARCH).

4. SOMARE DOUBTS THAT HE WILL VISIT THE U.S. THIS YEAR, BUT STATED SIR MAORI KIKI WILL VISIT THE UNITED NATIONS. SOMARE NOTED THAT HE MAY BE FACED WITH ELECTIONS BUT THAT MIGHT CONSIDER A VISIT TO SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES AFTER HIS VISIT TO AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

5. SOMARE STATED PNG RELATIONS WITH INDONESIA ARE GOOD, THAT FOREIGN MINISTER MALIK WAS IN PNG LAST YEAR, AND THAT KIKI AND MALIK HAVE ESTABLISHED A GOOD RAPPORT. IN RESPONSE TO THE TIMOR SITUATION SOMARE SAID IT IS NOT UP TO PNG TO TELL INDONESIA ITS BUSINESS, AND THAT PNG CONSIDERED THE MATTER TO BE AN INTERNAL PROBLEM.

6. HABIB INDICATED THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THE SPNFZ WITH FIJI PRIME MINISTER MARA AND NEW ZEALAND'S PRIME MINISTER MULDOON AS WELL AS WITH AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN
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MINISTER PEACOCK. MARA'S FUNDAMENTAL INTEREST IS IN ATMOSPHERIC NUCLEAR TESTING; HE UNDERSTANDS THE U.S. STRATEGIC INTEREST AND THERE IS NO PROBLEM. HE WILL NOT WITHDRAW THE UNITED NATIONS SPNFZ RESOLUTION BUT WILL CONCENTRATE ON THE TESTING ISSUE. MARA WAS TOLD THAT WE HAVE NO DIFFERENCES ON THE TESTING ISSUE AS WE ARE A SIGNATORY TO THE NUCLEAR TEST BAN TREATY.

7. SOMARE SAID THE ISSUE WOULD BE DISCUSSED AT THE SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM MEETING, THAT PNG HAS SUPPORTED THE SPNFZ RESOLUTION AND IT TOO WAS PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH ATMOSPHERIC TESTING. A FOREIGN AFFAIRS OFFICIAL INJECTED THE STATEMENT THAT THE PRINCIPLE OF SPNFZ WAS IN ITSELF OF IMPORTANCE.

8. HABIB THANKED SOMARE FOR ALLOWING U.S. MILITARY AIR-CRAFT TO TRANSIT PNG ON THEIR WAY TO EXERCISES IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

9. THE DISCUSSION CONCLUDED WITH HABIB THANKING SOMARE FOR HIS HOSPITALITY, WHICH SOMARE SAID PNG WAS PLEASED TO EXTEND IN RETURN FOR THAT WHICH HE HAD RECEIVED IN THE UNITED STATES.
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